

IN THE CLAIMS:

A complete listing of all the claims is now presented.

Please cancel claims 2 and 3 without prejudice, and please amend claims 1 to recite the features thereof.

Claim 1. (Currently Amended).

A procedure to create a fleece (44) made of fibers (14) with numerous hole structures (36) extending over the entire cross-section of the fleece (44), comprising:

- in a first step, the fibers (14) are randomly placed on a perforated belt (16) to form a fibrous web (18),
- in a second step, the fibrous web (18) is transported to a hole-structure-creating unit (20; 20a),

-in a third step, the hole-structure-creating unit (20; 20a) is a calendar having two rollers with facing surfaces (24, 28; 28a) between which the fibrous web (18) is guided, and the surface (24) of a first roller has numerous barbs (30) facing the fibrous web (18) and the surface (28;28a) of a second roller (26; 40a) has openings (32, 32a) in which the barbs (3) of the first surface (24) can at least partially enter, such that the fibers (14) of the fibrous web (18) below the barbs (30) are displaced without being destroyed when the barbs (30) sink into the openings (32; 32a) and the hole structures (36) are formed

without a heat treatment or simultaneous compression, and

the hole structures (36) are created by mechanically displacing the fibers (14), and the displacement of the fibers (14) does not influence their mechanical and chemical structure, and

-in a fourth step, directly after creating the hole structure, the fibrous web (18) with the hole structures (36) is bonded in a calendar roller arrangement (38; 38a) to form a fleece (44);

wherein the fibrous web (18) is additionally transformed by stiffening and thermobonding to form a fleece (44); and

wherein before the third step, the fibrous web (18) is prebonded so that the tensile strength of the prebonded fibrous web (18) is 0.1 to 75% of the tensile strength of the bonded fleece (4).

Claim 2. (Cancelled).

Claim 3. (Cancelled).

Claim 4. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the fibers (14) surrounding the hole structures (36) are additionally fixed before feeding the fibrous web (18) to the bonding unit (38; 38a).

Claim 5. (Previously Presented).

A procedure to create a fleece (44) made of fibers (14) with numerous hole structures (36) extending over the entire cross-section of the fleece (44), comprising:

- in a first step, the fibers (14) are randomly placed on a perforated belt (16) to form a fibrous web (18),
- in a second step, the fibrous web (18) is transported to a hole-structure-creating unit (20; 20a),
- in a third step, the hole-structure-creating unit (20; 20a) is a calendar having two rollers with facing surfaces (24, 28; 28a) between which the fibrous web (18) is guided, and the surface (24) of a first roller has numerous barbs (30) facing the fibrous web (18) and the surface (28; 28a) of a second roller (26; 40a) has openings (32, 32a) in which the barbs (3) of the first surface (24) can at least partially enter, such that the fibers (14) of the fibrous web (18) below the barbs (30) are displaced without being destroyed when the barbs (30) sink into the openings (32; 32a) and the hole structures (36) are formed without a heat treatment or simultaneous compression, and

the hole structures (36) are created by mechanically displacing the fibers (14) and the displacement of the fibers (14) does not influence their mechanical and chemical structure, and

- in a fourth step, directly after creating the hole structure, the fibrous web (18) with the hole structures (36) is bonded in a calendar roller arrangement (38; 38a) to form a fleece (44); and

wherein the fibrous web (18) is fed directly to the bonding unit (38; 38a) after the hole structure (36) is created.

Claim 6. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 5, wherein the fourth step directly follows the third step.

Claim 7. (Cancelled).

Claim 8. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the openings (32; 32a) of the second surface (28; 28a) communicate with a vacuum source so that fibers (14) of the fibrous web (18) in the area of the openings (32; 32a) are sucked into the openings (32; 32a).

Claim 9. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the openings (32; 32a) of the second surface (28; 28a) communicate with a pressure source so that fibers (14) of the fibrous web (18) in the area of the openings (32; 32a) are blown out of the openings (32; 32a).

Claim 10. (Cancelled).

Claim 11. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the roller has a diameter of 100 - 500 mm.

Claim 12. (Currently Amended).

A procedure according to claim 1, ~~wherein the~~ further comprising a first element which is a lowering and raising plate.

Claim 13. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the barbs (30) of the first element are conical.

Claim 14. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the barbs (30) have an involuted shape.

Claim 15. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the barbs (30) have an ogival cross-section.

Claim 16. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the barbs are 0.5-5 mm high.

Claim 17. (Currently Amended).

A procedure according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ further comprising a second element which is a perforated belt.

Claim 18. (Cancelled).

Claim 19. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the hole structures (36) have a diameter of 0.5-5 mm.

Claim 20. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 19, wherein the bonding surface is 3-40% of the fleece surface.

Claim 21. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 19, wherein the number of bonding points (48) is 20 - 120 per square centimeter.

Claim 22. (Previously Presented).

A procedure according to claim 19, wherein the shape of the hole structures (36) is noncircular.

Claim 23. (Previously Presented). A procedure according to claim 19, wherein the distance between individual hole structures (36) is irregular.

Claim 24. (Previously Presented). A procedure according to claim 1, wherein the fibrous web (18) is bonded to at least one other sheet medium before creating the hole structures (36).

Claim 25. (Currently Amended). A procedure according to claim ~~3~~, 1, wherein before the third step, the fibrous web (18) is prebonded so that the tensile strength of the prebonded fibrous web (18) is 0.1 to 50% of the tensile strength of the bonded fleece (4).